

Sustainability—The Commission will promote programs and projects that meet the current needs of communities and provide for the anticipated needs of future generations.

Accountability—The Commission will set measurable standards of effectiveness and efficiency for both internal and external activities.

Goals

The goals generated by the strategic planning process define conditions that must be created to realize the Denali Commission Vision.

1. All Alaska, no matter how isolated, will have the physical infrastructure necessary to protect health and safety and to support self-sustaining economic development.

2. Local residents in Alaskan communities will be provided the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to be employed on the construction, operation and management jobs created by publicly funded physical infrastructure in their communities.

3. Alaskans will have access to financial and technical resources necessary to build a cash economy to supplement the existing subsistence economy.

4. Federal and state agencies will simplify procedures, share information, and improve coordination to ensure equitable delivery of services to all Alaskan communities.

Implementation Guiding Principles

- Projects must be sustainable. To assist with the implementation of this principle, an *Investment Strategy* has been drafted to ensure that the level of funding provided by the Denali Commission to infrastructure projects in small, declining and/or environmentally threatened communities serves a public purpose and is invested in the most conscientious and sustainable manner possible. (The *Investment Strategy* is now available on the Denali Commission website for *public review and comment*.)

- The Denali Commission will generally not select individual projects for funding nor manage individual projects, but will work through existing state, federal or other appropriate organizations to accomplish its mission.

- Projects in economically distressed communities will have priority for Denali Commission assistance.

- Projects should be compatible with local cultures and values.

- Projects that provide substantial health and safety benefit, and/or enhance traditional community values,

will generally receive priority over those that provide more narrow benefits.

- Projects should be community-based and regionally supported.
- Projects should have broad public involvement and support. Evidence of support might include endorsement by affected local government councils (municipal, Tribal, IRA, etc.), participation by local governments in planning and overseeing work, and local cost sharing on an “ability to pay” basis.

- Priority will generally be given to projects with substantial cost sharing.

- Priority will generally be given to projects with a demonstrated commitment to local hire.

- Denali Commission funds may supplement existing funding, but will not replace existing federal, state, local government, or private funding.

- The Denali Commission will give priority to funding needs that are most clearly a federal responsibility.

- Denali Commission funds will not be used to create unfair competition with private enterprise.

Additional Guiding Principles for Infrastructure:

- A project should be consistent with a comprehensive community or regional plan.

- Any organization seeking funding assistance must have a demonstrated commitment to operation and maintenance of the facility for its design life. This commitment would normally include an institutional structure to levy and collect user fees if necessary, to account for and manage financial resources, and having trained and certified personnel necessary to operate and maintain the facility.

Additional Guiding Principles for Economic Development

- Priority will be given to projects that enhance employment in high unemployment areas of the State (economically distressed), with emphasis on sustainable, long-term local jobs or career opportunities.

- Projects should be consistent with statewide or regional plans.

- The Denali Commission may fund demonstration projects that are not a part of a regional or statewide economic development plan if such projects have significant potential to contribute to economic development.

Additional Guiding Principles for Training

- Training should increase the skills and knowledge of local residents to become employed on jobs created by the Denali Commission’s investment in public facilities in a community.

Intergovernmental Coordination—The Memorandum of Understanding:

The Denali Commission Act recognizes that our mission can only be accomplished through a collaborative, coordinated effort by the State of Alaska and key federal agencies. The State of Alaska also recognizes benefits can be furthered if State agencies work in a collaborative and coordinated effort. With this in mind, Denali Commission has drawn up a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which more than 20 agencies have agreed to, that outlines some points of agreement that will facilitate the collaboration and coordination necessary for achievement of the purposes of the Denali Commission and related missions of agencies who are parties to the MOU.

The Points of the MOU Are—

- **Sustainability.** Federal and State agencies recognize the importance of utilizing sustainability principles when investing in public infrastructure projects

- **Regional Strategies.** Systematic planning and coordination on a local, regional and statewide basis are necessary to achieve the most effective results from investment in infrastructure, economic development, and training.

- **Community Plans.** A single community strategic plan should be sufficient to identify and establish the priorities of each rural community.

- **Sharing Information.** Sharing information increases efficiencies and decreases duplication of services by State and Federal agencies.

- **Economic Development.** Economic development facilitates and supports the growth of self-sufficient communities.

- **Non-Profit Organizations and Other Community Organizations.** Non-profit and other organizations in Alaska are a valuable resource for State and Federal Agencies. They provide regional planning, program support and partnering opportunities

- **Workforce Development (Vocational and Career Training).** Workforce development is a critical component to building sustainable public infrastructure and self-sufficient communities in Alaska.

Workplan for 2004

The Commission has determined that the scope and scale of infrastructure issues facing rural Alaska are staggering. The total of known basic infrastructure needs for Alaskan communities is estimated to be over \$13 billion. These infrastructure needs include: